

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 05511 031632Z

63

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0048

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 05511

E.O. 11652: N GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, PO

SUBJECT: BRITISH RECOGNIZE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT

REF: LUANDA 261

1. BRITISH FORMALLY RECOGNIZED NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT MAY 2. THIS MOVE WAS TAKEN AFTER CONSULTATION WITH EC AND COMMONWEALTH PARTNERS AND WAS TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH VISIT TO LONDON, AT INVITATION OF BRITISH LABOR PARTY, OF PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER DR. MARIO SOARES.

2. SOARES VISIT INCLUDED TALKS WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN AND PRIME MINISTER WILSON. SOARES INDICATED HE WAS IN LONDON WITH FULL KNOWLEDGE AND AGREEMENT OF JUNTA AND URGED HMG TO RECOGNIZE NEW GOVERNMENT.

3. AT A NEWS CONFERENCE, SOARES DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER HE WOULD JOIN A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT. HE SUGGESTED THAT SUCH AN INITIATIVE SHOULD COME FROM THE JUNTA BUT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 LONDON 05511 031632Z

EMPHASIZED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO REPRESENT ALL

DEMOCRATIC GROUPS INCLUDING COMMUNISTS. HE SAID HE WAS NOT PRESSING FOR A POPULAR FRONT, BUT A MUCH WIDER ASSEMBLY OF ROMAN CATHOLICS, LIBERALS, DEMOCRATIC CONSERVATIVES, SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS. HE SAID "IT MUST BE A CIVIL GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTED IN TWO WEEKS AT THE MOST" AND ADDED THAT HIS PARTY WOULD NEVER PARTICIPATE IN A "GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL SALVATION" NOMINATED BY THE JUNTA IF PARTIES LIKE THE COMMUNISTS WERE EXCLUDED.

4. SOARES REPORTEDLY SAID TWO GREAT DANGERS FACE PORTUGAL: ECONOMIC DISINTEGRATION WHICH COULD LEAD TO A COUNTERCOUP, AND A UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY PORTUGUESE SETTLERS IN THE AFRICAN COLONIES. HE SAID HE WANTED A CEASE-FIRE IN THE PORTUGUESE COLONIAL WARS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND NEGOTIATIONS TO BE OPENED WITH LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

5. ON ANOTHER ASPECT OF PORTUGAL'S FOREIGN RELATIONS HE SAID THAT IBERIAN PACT WITH SPAIN WAS "SOMETHING BELONGING TO THE PAST" BROUGHT ABOUT BY TWO FASCIST DICTATORS. BUT HE ADDED THAT "WE SHOULD TRY TO MAKE OUR RELATIONS WITH SPAIN AS CORDIAL AS POSSIBLE"

6. COMMENT: IT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY EASIER FOR LABOR GOVERNMENT TO RECOGNIZE SPINOLA REGIME AFTER BEING URGED TO DO SO BY SOARES. FCO PORTUGUESE DESK OFFICER TOLD US THAT BECAUSE SOARES VISIT WAS AT INVITATION OF LABOR PARTY, IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT "IN NATURE OF THINGS" FCO MIGHT NOT LEARN DETAILS OF SOARES' TALKS WITH CALLAGHAN AND WILSON. IN REPLY TO QUESTION, HE DID SAY THAT NETO (LUANDA'S 261) HAD BEEN IN LONDON, BUT THAT HE DOUBTED SOARES HAD OPPORTUNITY OR TIME TO MEET HIM WHILE HERE.

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